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FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE


ON

HOUSING

JANUARY 22 AND 23, 1973

COMMUNIQUE

Canada [Conferences]



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COMMUNIQUE

1. A Federal-Provincial Conference on Housing was held in Ottawa on January 22 and 23, 1973. The Conference which was chaired by the Hon. Ron Basford, Minister of State for Urban Affairs, was attended by federal and provincial ministers concerned with housing. Representatives of municipalities were included on all provincial delegations, and the Northwest Territories and the Yukon were represented on the federal delegation. A list of delegates and advisors is appended.
2. The Conference considered the following agenda:
 1. Housing Problems of the 1970s
 2. Amendments to the National Housing Act
 3. Residential Mortgage Financing Act
 4. Intergovernmental Operating Relationships
 5. Future Process of Joint Policy and Program Development
3. With regard to Item 1, there was a general discussion of the diverse housing needs in Canada. All governments welcomed the Conference as an opportunity to discuss these issues. In particular, it was agreed that there would be:
 - (1) regular conferences at the ministerial level on housing matters, and more systematic and continuous consultation at the official level;
 - (2) forward planning and budgeting at least on a 3-year basis on the part of both federal and provincial governments;
 - (3) immediate intergovernmental consultation on the development of a coherent strategy for urban land development, and new communities, for consideration at the November Tri-Level Conference on Urban Affairs.

Provincial concern about the adequacy of the \$100 million

annual federal commitment for public land development pointed clearly to the necessity for such consultation.

There was discussion about the wide variety of housing conditions and needs in the different provinces and in the different localities across the country. In particular, the varying rural and urban composition of the Canadian provinces was highlighted and the importance of rural housing needs as well as those of urban areas. The Federal Minister proposed to commit funds for a continuing examination of housing needs in the country and their variation from place to place, from province to province, and from year to year.

4. In respect of Item 2, the Conference discussed the proposals put forward by the Federal Minister concerning amendments to the National Housing Act. The proposals provided for new programs and program modifications in respect to assisted home ownership; non-profit housing; co-operative housing; residential rehabilitation; neighbourhood improvement; new communities; land assembly; purchaser protection; research; and development projects. General support was expressed by the provinces with regard to these proposals. At the same time, a number of provinces contended that the level of funding would not be adequate to cover both new and continuing programs, under the N.H.A. They also suggested a number of points that would need to be considered in the course of implementation. The Federal Minister agreed that examination of these matters, which would be covered by regulation rather than by statute, would be continued at the officials' level.

Sewage treatment was discussed and the Federal Minister assured the Conference that it was the intent of the government to consult on requirements and to continue a program in this area.

5. In discussing intergovernmental relations the federal government proposed a fundamental restructuring which would involve an undertaking that funding provided through the capital budget of C.M.H.C. would be maintained at existing levels at least; a concerted effort to establish a common base for the measurement of housing needs; a 3-year forward commitment of program funds; and an annual meeting at the ministerial level to agree on new forward commitments and to readjust existing forward commitments. Several provinces expressed preference for a kind of block funding which would leave program selection in provincial hands. While there was some difference of view concerning this approach to funding, it was agreed that there was a need for greater flexibility in the allocation of funds under the N.H.A. It was acknowledged that the federal proposals were a substantial improvement on the present practices.
6. In regard to the last item on the agenda, it was agreed to recommend that housing should be included as an item on the agenda for the Tri-Level Conference in November. It was further agreed that meetings between the federal and provincial ministers of housing would be held prior to the formulation of their respective budgets, municipal representation at these meetings to be determined by the provinces.

January 22, 1973

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ON

Mr. T. K. Shoyama
Assistant Deputy Minister
Dept. of Finance HOUSING

JANUARY 22 AND 23, 1973

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Mr. H. Kuchel
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